

Message Text

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ACTION EA-14

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O R 310935 Z MAR 73

FM AMEMBASSY SAIGON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 9441

INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

AMEMBASSY BUDAPEST

AMEMBASSY JAKARTA

AMEMBASSY MANILA

AMEMBASSY OTTAWA

AMEMBASSY PHNOM PENH

USDEL JEC PARIS

AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE

AMEMBASSY WARSAW

AMCONGEN DANANG

AMCONGEN NHA TRANG

AMCONSUL BIEN HOA

AMCONGEN CAN THO

CINCPAC

MMRGA/ CDRUSSAG NKP RTAFB

COMUSMACTHAI

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 SAIGON 5324

E. O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINS PINT MILI VS

SUBJECT: VIETNAM CEASEFIRE SITUATION REPORT - MARCH 31, 1973

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

THIS REPORT SUMMARIZES ALL PERTINENT INFORMATION AVAILABLE
TO THE EMBASSY AS OF 2000 MARCH 31

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(ICCS)

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PART I: INTERNATIONAL COMMISSION OF CONTROL & SUPERVISION
(ICCS)

1. THE MARCH 30 PLENARY CONSIDERED REPORTS FROM REGION I ON
WHY THE REGIONAL TEAM WAS NOT ABLE TO CARRY OUT THE CUA VIET
INVESTIGATION; AND FROM REGION V ON WHY THAT TEAM WAS UNABLE
TO GO FORWARD WITH THE INVESTIGATIONS WHICH HAD BEEN ORDERED
ON TONLE CHAM AND RACH BAP. ALL THREE REPORTS WILL BE SENT
TO THE JMC.

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2. THE SPLIT REPORT FROM REGION I ON THE VINH HOA PHUONG II
INVESTIGATION WAS DISCUSSED AND ALSO FORWARDED TO THE JMC.

3. AMBASSADOR BUNKER'S LETTER RE THE TERMS OF BAILMENT OF
AIRCRAFT TO AIR AMERICA, WHICH HAD BEEN RECEIVED EARLIER, WAS
CONSIDERED AND "GREAT GRATIFICATION" WAS EXPRESSED OVER THE RE-
DUCTION IN THE COSTS TO BE BORNE BY THE ICCS.

4. THE DISSOLUTION OF THE GVN'S ICCS LIAISON OFFICE WAS THE LAST TOPIC AND IT WAS DECIDED TO GIVE PRIORITY IN HIRING TO ITS FORMER EMPLOYEES.

5. THIS WAS THE HUNGARIAN AMBASSADOR'S LAST DAY IN THE CHAIR BUT HE DID NOT RPT NOT FOLLOW HIS CANADIAN COLLEAGUES EXAMPLE OF LAST MONTH AND MAKE A SUMMARY STATEMENT ON THE MONTH'S ACTIVITIES. THE INDONESIAN AMBASSADOR, GENERAL DHARSONO, WILL PRESIDE OVER THE ICCS MEETINGS DURING APRIL.

PART II. : FOUR PARTY JOINT MILITARY COMMISSION (FPJMC)

ALL US JMC PERSONNEL MOVED TO REGIONAL SITES FROM SUB-REGIONS ON MAR 29 AND ALL JMC ELEMENTS (EXECPT GVN) ARE TO HAVE REDEPLOYED TO SAIGON ON MAR 30 AND 31. LAST US JMC PERSONNEL SCHEDULED TO HAVE LEFT RVN BY END OF DAY MAR 31; US MILITARY REMAINING IN- COUNTRY WILL BE LIMITED TO 50 DAO PERSONNEL AND 159- MAN MARINE GUARD DETACHMENT.

DRV JMC ELEMENT BY MAR 31 WILL HAVE LEFT COUNTRY WITH EXCEPTION OF 35- MAN CONTINGENT REMAINING IN SAIGON AS PART OF THE JOINT MILITARY TEAM FOR THE RESOLUTION OF STATUS OF MIA. PRG REDEPLOYMENT FROM REGION TO SAIGON ALSO EXPECTED TO BE ACCOMPLISHED NO LATER THAN MAR 31. CHIEF OF PRG DELEGATION PLUS A PARTY OF FIVE, AT INVITATION OF DRV DELEGATION, WENT TO HANOI MAR 30; THEY WERE EXPECTED BACK IN SAIGON ON MAR 31. THERE IS NO INDICATION AT THIS TIME WHEN AND IN WHAT NUMBERS PRG PERSONNEL WILL DEPLOY IN FPJMC CONTEXT.

PART III: FOUR- PARTY JOINT MILITARY TEAM (MISSING IN ACTION)
(FPJCC / MIA)

ACCORDING TO ART 10 OF THE PROTOCOL CONCERNING THE RETURN OF CAPTURED MILITARY PERSONNEL, ETC., A FOUR- PARTY JOINT MILITARY TEAM (MISSING IN ACTION) (FPJMT/ MIA) HAS BEEN ESTABLISHED.
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LISHED TO CONTINUE THE SEARCH FOR DEAD AND MISSING. THERE HAS BEEN CONSIDERABLE DISCUSSION OF LIAISON FLIGHTS BETWEEN HANOI AND SAIGON FOR SUPPORT OF THE FPJMT/ MIA. THE DRV HAS PROPOSED

ALTERNATING FLIGHTS WITH RPM AND DRV AIRCRAFT.

THE RVN INITIALLY REFUSED THIS PROPOSAL ALTHOUGH, ACCORDING TO LT. GEN THUAN, CHIEF RVN REP ON THE FPJMC, NO FINAL DECISION HAS BEEN MADE. AS AN INTERIM MEASURE THE US HAS OFFERED TO PROVIDE WEEKLY C-130 FLIGHTS TO HANOI FROM SAIGON AND RETURN.

PART IV: GVN/ PRG BILATERALS

FOUR SESSION OF GVN/ PRG BILATERAL CONSULTATIONS HELD MAR 30 AND MADE NO NOTICEABLE PROGRESS ACCORDING TO REPORTS FROM

PARIS (USDEL FRANCE 9012). IN PREPARED STATEMENTS BOTH SIDES PRESENTED SUMMARIES OF SITUATION SIXTY DAYS AFTER ACCORD, EACH CLAIMING SCRUPULOUS COMPLIANCE WITH TERMS OF PARIS AGREEMENT AND BLAMING OTHER FOR CONTINUED FIGHTING IN VIETNAM AND CONTINUED IMPASSE IN PARIS DISCUSSIONS. FIFTH SESSION WILL BE HELD APRIL 3.

PART V: PRESIDENT THIEU LEAVES FOR UNITED STATES

1. PRESIDENT THIEU LEFT FOR UNITED STATES ON MAR 31. HE WILL STOP IN GUAM TO DECORATE US B52 PILOTS, THEN PROCEED TO CALIFORNIA FOR TWO DAYS OF TALKS WITH PRESIDENT NIXON ON APRIL 2 AND 3. AFTER THAT HIS PLANS CALL FOR A VISIT TO WASHINGTON TO MEET, ACCORDING TO OFFICIAL VIETNAM PRESS, WITH CONGRESSIONAL, BUSINESS, AND LABOR LEADERS, AND PRESS CIRCLES. HE WILL ALSO ADDRESS THE NATIONAL PRESS CLUB AND LAY A WREATH AT THE TOMB OF THE UNKNOWN SOLDIER. DURING A SIDE TRIP TO TEXAS ON APRIL 7, HE WILL VISIT THE TOMB OF PRESIDENT JOHNSON AND CALL ON MRS. JOHNSON. HE WILL RETURN BY WAY OF EUROPE WHERE HE WILL CALL ON THE POPE , PRESIDENT OF ITALY, PRIME MINISTER OF GREAT BRITAIN, AND POSSIBLY THE PRESIDENT OF FRG. ON THE WAY BACK TO VIETNAM, HE WILL VISIT KOREA APRIL 11 AND 12, AND REPUBLIC OF CHINA ON APRIL 12 AND 13. HE IS ACCOMPANIED BY MRS. THIEU, CHIEF OF JOINT GENERAL STAFF, FOREIGN MINISTER, MINISTERS OF FINANCE AND ECONOMY, AND A LARGE RETINUE.

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2. PRESENCE OF MINISTERS OF ECONOMY AND FINANCE IN PARTY HAVE LED TO OBVIOUS CONCLUSION THAT SUBJECT OF FURTHER ECONOMIC AID TO SOUTH VIETNAM WILL BE INCLUDED IN TALKS WITH US AUTHORITIES. HOWEVER, SEMI- OFFICIAL DAILY TIN SONG CITES MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS SOURCE TO EFFECT THAT PRESIDENT THIEU WILL ALSO SEEK CONTINUED ASSURANCES OF US MILITARY SUPPORT IF DRV RESUMES LARGE- SCALE HOSTILITIES, AS A FIRM STATEMENT BY THE US PRESIDENT ON THIS SUBJECT WOULD DETER DRV FROM SUCH A COURSE.

PART VI: MR 1

1. INCIDENTS ROSE IN MR 1 TO 25, OF WHICH 21 WERE ATTACKS BY FIRE (ABF). FIRST DIVISION TOOK 17 OF THE ABFS INCLUDING 75 ARTILLERY AND 174 MORTOR ROUNDS. SOUTH OF THE HAI VAN PASS WAS RELATIVELY QUIET. FRIENDLY CASUALTIES WERE 7 MIA AND 34 WIA (50 PERCENT BY MINES); ENEMY 22 KIA, 1 CAPTURED . FRIENDLY URTILLERY FIRED 879 ROUNDS, 646 NNORTH OF THE HAI VAN PASS (ALL BY FIRST DIVISION). 233 SOUTH.

2. INTELLIGENCE REPORTS IN QUANG NGAI INDICATE THAT ELEMENTS OF THE 2 ND NVA DIVISION, WHICH WITHDREW INTO THE MOUNTAINS

ALONG THE QUANG NGAI AND BINH DINH BORDER AFTER BEING ROUTED FROM THE SA HUYNH AREA, HAVE NOW COMPLETED THEIR RETRAINING AND REFITTING AND ARE AGAIN MOVING EASTWARD TO RESUME PRES-SURE ON FRIENDLY TROOPS IN THAT AREA. THE SAME IS BELIEVED TRUE OF ENEMY UNITS SUCH AS THE 30 TH AND 40 TH LOCAL FORCE BATTALIONS IN EASTERN BINH SON AND SON TINH DISTRICTS WHICH HAVE ALSO AVOIDED CONTACT DURING THE PAST MONTH.

3. LIAISON OFFICER DANANG REPORTS THAT PEOPLE ARE PRIMARILY CONCERNED ABOUT RISING COSTS OF LIVING AND MANY BELIEVE THAT GOVERNMENT CADRE OF ALL LEVELS SPEND TOO MUCH TIME ON POLITICAL PROPAGANDIZING AND PROSELYTIZING TO THE NEGLECT OF THE DISCHARGE OF THEIR RESPONSIBILITIES SUCH AS SOLVING THE DIFFICULT ECONOMIC PROBLEMS.

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USDEL JEC PARIS

AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE

AMEMBASSY WARSAW

AMCONSUL DANANG

AMCONSUL NHA TRANG

AMCONSUL BIEN HOA

AMCONSUL CAN THO

CINCPAC

CDRUSSAG NKP RTAFB

COMUSMACTHAI

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PART VII: MR 2

1. MILITARY ACTIVITY DWINDLED TO INSIGNIFICANT DURING
24- HOUR REPORTING PERIOD.

2. DELAYED REPORT FROM BINH THUAN INDICATES THAT GROUP OF
69 CIVILIANS IN HOA DA DISTRICT WERE TEMPORARILY ABDUCTED

MAR 27 AND MADE TO LISTEN TO VC PROPAGANDA LECTURE ON MEANING
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OF PARIS AGREEMENT. AFTER HEARING DETAILS OF " COMMUNIST
VICTORY," CAPTIVE AUDIENCE WAS RELEASED.

3. FPJMC/ TPJMC: ALL DRV DELEGATES TO FPJMC DEPARTED
TRUCE REGIONS 3 AND 4 MAR 30. PLEIKU DRV ELEMENT EXPERI-
ENCED AIRPORT DELAYS LASTING THREE TO FOUR HOURS; DELEGATES
WERE KEPT WAITING IN BUSES WHILE BAGGAGE- ALLOWANCE DIFFICUL-
TIES WERE DEBATED. ICCS CANDEL MEDIATED DISPUTE AND DRV
PERSONNEL WERE FINALLY PERMITTED TO TAKE BAGGAGE ALONG.

4. AS OF MIDA- FTERNOON MAR 30, 46 PRG DLEEGATE WERE STILL
AWAITING TRANSPORTATION FROM PHAN THIET TO SAIGON.
NO LATER INTO AVAILABLE) ACCORDING TO US JMT ELEMENT THERE,
RELATIONS BETWEEN PRG AND GVN ELEMENTS OF FPJMC SUFFERED
LAST- MINUTE DETERIORATION.

5. CHIEF OF GVN JMT ELEMENT IN CHEO REO WILL STAY ON WITH
TPJMC. HIS COUNTERPART IN NINH HOA EXPECTS TO DO LIKEWISE
ALTHOUGH HE DOES NOT YET HAVE ORDERS. BY CONTRAST, GVN
TEAM CHIEF IN TUY AN BEING TRANSFERRED TO MR-4 ON APRIL 1;
DEPUTY PROVINCE CHIEF FOR SECURITY (PHU YEN) WILL HEAD GVN' S
TPJMT ELEMENT.

6. TUY AN SUB- REGIONAL TEAM WAS TO BEGIN OFFICIAL INVESTI-
GATION OF MAR 20 TRAIN MINING IN PHU YEN ON MAR 31, AND
BANMETHUOT TEAM HAS FINALLY EMBARKED ON INVESTIGATION OF
TWO INCIDENTS IN BUON HO DISTRICT, DARLAC, HOWEVER, ICCS
TEAMS IN PHU BON (CF REGION3) AND BINH THUAN (CF REGION 4)
REMAIN STUCK IN CYCLE OF DISCUSSION, DELAY, AND FURTHER
DISCUSSION.

PART VIII: MAR 3

1. VC / NVA ACTIVITY WAS MODERATE THROUGHOUT MR III EXCEPT
FOR THE CONTINUING ATTACK ON TONLE CHAM BASE CAMP. THE
OUTPOST RECEIVED ANOTHER 130 ROUNDS OF MORTAR AND ROCKETS IN
7 SEPARATE ABFS THROUGH 1200 HRS ON 30 MARCH. FOVE MORE
RAGNERS WERE WOUNDED. THERE WERE A TOTAL OF 10 INCIDENTS IN
SIX OF MR III' S ELEVEN PROVINCES IN WHICH THE VC/ NVA LOST
FIVE KILLED AND ONE SERIOUSLY WOUNDED. FRIENDLY CASUALTIES

W

WERE FOUR WOUNDED. THREE CIVILIANS WERE KILLED IN A ROCKET
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ATTACK ON THE 351 ST RF BATTALION 9 KM EAST OF TAY NINH CITY.

2. A BRIEF BUT SHARP GROUND ACTION OCCURRED 6 KM EAST OF
TRANG BANG DISTRICT SEAT ON THE TAY NINH/ HAU NGHAI PROVINCE
BORDER WHEN AN UNKNOWN SIZE HOSTILE FORCE ATTACKED THE 2 ND
BATTALION OF THE ARVN 46 TH INFANTRY REGIMENT CONDUCTION
SECURITY OPERATIONS IN THE AREA. THE VC/ NVA LOST 13
KILLED WHILE ARVN CASUALTIES WERE FOUR KILLED AND FIVE
WOUNDED.

3. ARVN III CORPS REPORTS ALL POPULATION CENTERS AND LINES
OF COMMUNICATION, EXCEPT QL 13 NORTH OF LAI KHE IN BINH
DUONG PROVINCE, TO BE SECURE AND OPEN TO CIVILIAN TRAFFIC.
MR III HEADQUARTERS G2 BELIEVES VC/ NVA MAIN FORCE UNITS
IDENTIFIED AS BEING LOCATED IN MR III ARE DEPLOYED DEFENSIVELY
TO PROVIDE SECURITY FOR VC/ NVA- CONTROLLED AREAS AND INTELLI-
GENCE DOES NOT POINT TO AN OFFENSIVE IN THE IMMEDIATE FUTURE.

PART IX: MR 4

1. THE PACE OF MILITARY ACTIVITY IN MR IV REMAINS UNCHANGED.
FIFTY- THREE INCIDENTS OCCURRED ON MAR 30; THE GREAT MAJORITY
WERE LARGELY INEFFECTIVE ATTACKS BY FIRE; RVNAF CASUALTIES
REMAINED ALMOST THE SAME AS THE AVERAGE OF PAST WEEKS
(OVER 15 KIA AND ABOUT 100 WIA A DAY). MR IV REPORTED
VC/ NVA CASUALTIES DECLINED ON MAR 30 TO A LOW ELEVEN. THE
MAJORITY OF INCIDENTS WERE CONCENTRATED IN NORTHERN KIEN
PHONG AND CHUONG THIEN. DINH TUONG CONTINUES TO BE QUIET ,
CONFIRMING ARVN SPECULATION THAT VC/ NVA MAIN FORCES
ARE STANDING DOWN TEMPORARILY FOR RESUPPLY.

2. ICCS/ JMC: REGION VII ICCS HAD CONSIDERED 60 GVN
INVESTIGATION REQUESTS OUT OF 71 SUBMITTED AS OF MARCH 31.
THIRTY WERE TURNED DOWN, MOST BECAUSE THE INCIDENT SITE WAS
INSECURE. OTHERS WERE REJECTED BECAUSE THERE WAS NO SUB-
STANTIVE EVIDENCE ON WHICH TO BASE FINDINGS ON BECAUSE THE
COMPLAINT HAD BEEN SUBMITTED TOO LONG AFTER THE VIOLATION.
EIGHT REPORTS HAVE GONE FROM REGION TO SAIGON AND SIX MORE
WILL BE FORWARDED NEXT WEEK. OF THE 60 VIOLATIONS, 36 WERE
SHELLINGS OF MORE OR LESS CIVILIAN AREAS, 13 WERE ATTACKS
ON OUTPOSTS, AND THE REMAINDER AN ASSORTMENT OF MININGS,
GRENADINGS, ETC.
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3. THE VC/ NVA OFFENSIVE AGAINST HONG NGU AND CAI CAI IN NORTHERN KIEN PHONG IS SLOWING DOWN SLIGHTLY AFTER TEN DAYS OF HEAVY FIGHTING. ACCORDING TO SOURCES IN CHAU DOC SECTOR, IN THE FIRST WEEK OF COMBAT THE VC/ NVA SCORED SEVERAL IMPRESSIVE SUCCESSES. A BATTALION AND A RECONNAISSANCE COMPANY OF THE 14 TH REGIMENT, 9 TH ARVN DIVISION WERE MAULED IN THE INITIAL ATTACKS AND TWO RF OUTPOSTS WERE OVERRUN OR ABANDONED. RVNAF HAS RETAKEN NEITHER POSITION.

4. THE IV CORPS ARVN G-2 ESTIMATES THE HONG NGU- CAI CAI AREAS OF NORTHERN KIEN PHONG WILL BE THE PRIMARY VC/ NVA TARGETS IN MR IV IN THE IMMEDIATE FUTURE. IN HONG NGU, THEY WILL SEEK TO INVEST THE AREA, DRIVE OUT RVNAF, AND SUBSEQUENTLY POSITION ARTILLERY AND ANTI- AIRCRAFT DEFENSES IN SUFFICIENT STRENGTH TO DENY RVNAF REENTRY. THE SUCCESSFUL SEIZURE OF HONG NGU WOULD GIVE THE PRG ITS FIRST IN- COUNTRY SUPPLY POINT IN THE DELTA. IN THE COURSE OF THE ATTACKS WHICH MAY BEGIN DURING THE NEXT WEEK, THE VC/ NVA WILL TRY TO SQUEEZE THE ICCS TEAM OUT OF HONG NGU BY ROCKET AND MORTAR BARRAGES. THE ICCS WILL BE " REINVITED" ONCE THE AREA IS SECURELY IN VC/ NVA HANDS. IN THE CAI CAI AREA TO THE NORTHEAST, THE VC/ NVA WILL ATTEMPT INCREASE THEIR CONTROL OF THE " SAMPAN ALLEY" SUPPLY ROUTE INTO DINH TUONG (FURTHER DETAILS REPORTED IN CAN THO' S 0109).

5. VINH BINH SECTOR OFFICERS REPORT THAT THE LARGE NUMBER OF MEN PICKED UP BY THE VIET CONG IN VINH BINH RECENTLY ARE VERY YOUNG. ALL WERE BELOW THE GVN DRAFT AGE AND SOME WERE AS YOUNG AS 12. THE MAJORITY CAME FROM VINH BINH' S SOUTHERMOST DISTRICT OF LONG TOAN. MANY JOINED THE VC VOLUNTARILY. IN THE SAME DISTRICT, THE VC ARE CONDUCTING A MAJOR PROPAGANDA CAMPAIGN, PICKING UP LOCAL RESIDENTS AND TAKING THEM FOR THREE- DAY SESSIONS IN THE MANGROVE SWAMPS.

6. REPORTS OF CORRUPTION DURING THE POST- CEASEFIRE PERIOD ARE COMMON THROUGHOUT THE DELTA DESPITE AN INTENSIVE PROPAGANDA CAMPAIGN AGAINST IT IN SOME AREAS. BENNETT

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